

10, 2007 to deploy more than 20,000 additional United States combat troops to Iraq.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the record has been clear. The new commander for Iraq, General Petraeus, has had hearings and has now been confirmed unanimously by the Senate. The outgoing commander of Iraq, General Casey, has had hearings and has now been confirmed as the new chief of the United States Army unanimously. Both commanders and their subordinate commanders have indicated that these additional troops are needed.

We hear talk that we are supporting our troops, but basically the message to the troops is, Yes, with our lips we say we support you but with all of our actions we say, We don't believe a word you say. We don't think you know what you're talking about. We don't want to give you what you say is necessary to protect yourselves and to win the day in Iraq.

There are no proposed solutions in the resolution that we will debate this week, no proposed fixes, nothing proposed to help anybody. It just says, We disapprove, we don't agree with the generals, the commanders, those who are in the theater, those that have come from the theater who are on active duty.

Now, you will always have some retired generals and commanders who are not happy that they are retired and who will take their pot shots, but here again there are no new solutions, no new efforts in Iraq. The Democratic Party does not propose to change anything. So this resolution, I guess, could be more properly categorized as stay the course, stiffen the enemy, start our collapse, because when you say to the world and to all of our enemies, We don't believe our commanders, we don't believe they know what they're talking about, we don't believe they know what they need, we're not going to have any new solutions, what you are doing to the enemy, you are stiffening their resolve. Materials that have been found in Iraq have indicated just that, that the Americans don't have the stomach, they ran from Vietnam, they didn't keep their commitments to the people of South Vietnam. Even after the Paris Accord, they did not keep their commitment. The new larger Democratic Congress in 1975 even cut off all the funds and millions of people in Southeast Asia lost their lives. In

1979 while I was stationed at Fort Benning, we were attacked. It was an act of war. And we did nothing. We begged to have our hostages returned. We did nothing. And those are the kind of things that the enemy goes back to in saying, we don't have the stomach to do this. In 1983 when our barracks was bombed in Beirut, we withdrew. In 1993 when the World Trade Center was attacked, we did virtually nothing on the international front. Then throughout the nineties, the attack of the USS Cole, Mozambique, Somalia, Africa, time and again, time and again we

showed we didn't have the resolve. This must be the time we stand firm, tell our enemy, We will defeat you, we have nothing but solutions. This resolution, the stay the course, stiffen the enemy, start our collapse resolution, is not the way to go. I hope our fellow Members of this House will do the right thing. We will try something new. We will try to help the troops. We will give them what they ask. The Democratic stay the course, stiffen the enemy and start our collapse resolution is not a solution.

IRAQ WAR RESOLUTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2007, the gentleman from New York (Mr. HALL) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. HALL of New York. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Indeed, as my colleague from across the aisle says, there are many of us, citizens and Members of this House, who do not believe our Commander in Chief, and we have good reason not to believe him. I wish it were not so.

After President Bush announced his escalation of the war, I said that he owed the American people an honest explanation as to why he thinks this surge will succeed when previous efforts have failed. Unfortunately, the President decided to stay the course and to begin the escalation before either House of Congress had a chance to consider it. Instead of providing a new comprehensive strategy to turn the tide in Iraq, President Bush offered the same tired rhetoric. Rather than engage in an important discussion with the American people, his loyalists prevented the Senate from debating this crucial matter.

Fortunately for us, such obstruction will not occur in this Chamber and the House will begin to take up this important debate this week. As a new Member of the House, I feel it is my responsibility to ask serious questions of our President who refuses to take this institution seriously. I ask my colleagues to join with me, to not try to score cheap political points but to push this administration and its supporters in Congress for real change in the direction of our Iraq policy. Our men and women in uniform, who have done everything that has been asked of them, deserve no less.

So I ask the President why this Congress should support his proposal to send 20,000 more troops into harm's way when his own former Iraq commander, General Abizaid, said it is not needed? Why should we support it when the Prime Minister of Iraq has himself expressed no support? And why should we support it when the American people have shown that they actively oppose the President's policy towards Iraq?

From the very outset, this administration has been wrong at every step of this war.

The administration led us into an unnecessary war with flawed or manipulated intelligence. Wrong.

This administration went to war without enough troops to win the peace. Wrong.

This administration gave no-bid contracts to its friends and political allies, locking out other countries who might have helped us and indeed locking out the Iraqis. Wrong.

President Bush stood on the deck of the USS Abraham Lincoln on May 1, 2003 and said, "Major combat operations in Iraq have ended. In the battle of Iraq, the United States and our allies have prevailed." Wrong.

This administration literally took piles of cash, flying pallets of millions of dollars from the U.S. mint to Baghdad, into a war zone, and lost billions of dollars of taxpayer money. Wrong.

Now this administration wants us to blindly place our faith and the lives of 20,000 more of our troops in an Iraqi government that has failed to meet every security obligation it has pledged. Sadly, once again, this President is wrong. And no amount of presidential wrongs is going to make the situation in Iraq right.

Last fall's National Intelligence Estimate concluded that the President's policy in Iraq is creating more terrorists than it is eliminating. Nothing in this policy will change that. Three thousand one hundred twenty-four American service men's and women's lives have been lost in Iraq as of yesterday. Three thousand one hundred twenty-five will not make it right.

It is time for a new strategy in Iraq. It is time to start to bring our brave men and women who have fought so courageously back home. By turning Iraq over to the Iraqis, we will force their government to fight for their own security. Al Qaeda in Iraq will lose their mission and be less likely to inflame the Sunni-Shiite conflict. And Iran and Syria will have to work for calm rather than sit in the shadows and stir the insurgency.

Mr. President, it is time for a new path for the United States and Iraq. This nonbinding resolution reflects the will of the American people. It is an important first step but only a first step. I look forward to working with my colleagues as we seek to untangle this disaster the administration has brought upon us all. Together, we can begin to repeal this tragic blunder and undo the damage done to our military, to our country, and to our standing in the world.

IRAQ WAR RESOLUTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2007, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WESTMORELAND) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

You know, I think we must be debating two different resolutions here

today. I just heard my colleague from across the aisle talk about a new plan. Of course, I guess that fits in with the smoke-and-mirror 110th Congress about a new plan. Well, if you don't want to increase the troop size, which the undemocratic majority evidently does not want to do with this resolution, and you don't want to stop the funding, then what do you want to do? You want to stay the course. I think the American people said in the election, we don't want to stay the course.

I think that our military leaders, we hear this resolution when the other side talks about it, they talk about supporting our troops. And I am sure General Petraeus is confused to get approved unanimously in the Senate and hear this resolution about supporting our troops and yet we don't want to follow what he has said we need to do. General Casey agrees with this and he has been confirmed to a new position. And so how can we tell our men and women in the field that, Hey, look, we support you, but don't listen to what your commanders have to say. We've got something different. We're going to micromanage the war from Washington.

A lot of the people that are going to be voting on this resolution have never been to Iraq. They have never been to Afghanistan. They have never seen some of the situations that our young men and women are put in for freedom-loving people all over this world. I don't know how they could actually vote on it if they have never been, but I guess they will. Because they are trying to paint a picture of having your cake and eating it, too. We support our troops but, look, we don't want to change our way of what we're doing. We don't want to try to help you with more troops, to try to help you save your life over there and securing these areas that you risked your life in going in to take, knock the enemy out, and then have to leave and let the enemy come back in and be even stronger. What kind of message does that send?

This is not about President Bush, because I think President Bush has tried every way, Mr. Speaker, he knows how to make this a successful campaign in Iraq and Afghanistan, and he continues to come up with new ideas through the help and the advice of his military commanders to win this war on terror. This is a global war on terror. Some people from the other side seem to believe that if we pull out of Iraq that the Iraqi people are going to go back to tending sheep and herding goats. That is not what is going to happen. If we pull out of Iraq, what is going to happen is you are going to see more bloodshed than we have seen in a long time in this world, and it is going to be the innocent Iraqi people who stuck their finger in that purple ink and went and voted for the first time in their life that are going to be the ones to suffer, the ones that said, we believe in freedom, we believe in governing ourselves, we support the coalition forces here be-

cause we believe that they're coming to free us from this tyrant that we have been under. Those are the ones that are going to die. Those are the ones that are going to suffer the most. Those are the Iraqis that are losing their lives today because they want freedom.

Our men and women in uniform, those blessed souls that are in Iraq and Afghanistan and are losing their lives, they volunteered to put their lives in harm's way not only to protect our freedom in this country, not only to protect this Republic that we have but to spread freedom and democracy all across the world to every human being that loves freedom and liberty. These brave men and women need our support. They need our encouragement. But what they don't need is a smoke-and-mirror resolution that is done for political reasons and because of political promises made on a campaign trail. They don't need that. They need real encouragement and support from this Congress. Let's do something to give them that and not do things that strengthens the enemy, discourages our troops and really and truly, I believe, goes against the Constitution. When we all took the oath of office, we made an oath to the Constitution, not to anybody else. Let's uphold that. Let's respect our Commander in Chief and the generals in the field.

IRAQ WAR RESOLUTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2007, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It is interesting listening to the Republican fog machine starting to churn out its smoke surrounding the resolution that we are going to be discussing this week. I listened to my friends from Texas and from Georgia talking about the innocent people that are going to suffer under the approaches that we are talking about. Well, it is interesting that polls show that the people in Iraq, the majority of them, think it's all right for the insurgents to shoot and kill our soldiers. They are not just fighting us. They are also fighting each other. The discussion this week is going to be the first honest and direct opportunity to start redirecting the course here.

Stay the course? My Lord, that is not remotely what we are talking about here. Anybody who has watched what the Democrats have done for the first month that they have been in power realize that we are setting in motion a foundation to do what should have been done from the outset: to regain the power of the purse, to be able to deal with oversight which has been completely abandoned by my Republican friends over the last 5 years, and start developing the policy framework that is going to be necessary to deal

with the disaster that has been created in Iraq. The increase in troops, the over 20,000 that we will be talking about this week, was not the first choice of the military and indeed the masterminds that President Bush turned to for this surge theory did not talk about 20,000 or 25,000. They wanted far more troops. They have stripped this down.

I heard my friend from Texas disparage the retired generals and admirals who have come forward to deal with their deep concern about the flawed strategy and implementation of the Iraq campaign. These are men and women who have proven their dedication to this country, who in many cases have been in far more battles than all the people in Congress combined, who don't have anything to win or lose by not speaking their mind. If you go back and check the record with what they have said, with what has happened in Iraq, I'll take those retired commanders every time. The fact is they've been right, and if the President and Congress had listened to them, we wouldn't be in the middle of the mess that we're in now.

I served in this body when President Clinton took steps to stop the genocide in the Balkans, and I watched the Republicans on the other side of the aisle be unable to figure out whether they supported the President, they were opposed to the President, or they wanted to change the policy. Go back and look at the former majority leader, Tom DeLay, who just couldn't figure out what to do in the Balkans but he sure knew that he wasn't going to support the Commander in Chief.

What the Democrats are doing now is laying a foundation that should have been done from the outset. We have had over 50 oversight hearings now, in the first month, more meaningful oversight than in the last 5 years of the Republicans who just couldn't bring people in to find out what happened to the billions of dollars in cash that is now unaccounted for. In committee after committee, the American people are finally getting to what should have happened years ago in terms of meaningful oversight. This is what the Truman Commission did during World War II. The Republicans would have no part of it, and now the American people are seeing for themselves. We will soon see in the appropriations process that Congress is regaining the power of the purse to make sure that the money will be spent properly.

There is no reason to not have troops that are deployed with a guarantee that they will have the equipment that they need. It was a travesty what men and women from my State were subjected to, being sent over to Iraq in a war of choice without being properly equipped. Under the Democratic watch, we are going to make sure that that is not going to happen.

Last but not least, by having a simple debate on whether or not this Congress approves of this escalation, we